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Le-cu, the cause of all the trouble, did not return for several days but was finally summoned by her mother when it became apparent that Lim A-pou had no intention of departing from the established cycle of responsibility for cooking. Many men make a hobby of cooking, displaying their special skills at banquets and the like. We often savored some of Lim Chieng-cua's specialties, but in this situation it would have been impossible for him to step into the breach for even one meal, serving his nephews and children. Instead, his eldest son managed, and managed quite well, until his sister returned to assist him. To my knowledge, no words were exchanged between daughter and father, but one look at her mother probably was punishment enough. I do not imagine that Chui-ieng passed up this opportunity to tell Le-cu what she had suffered on her behalf. For several weeks Le-cu was a model daughter, but she avoided her father whenever possible.

By the time Lim Chui-ieng was moving around the house again, Lau Kim-chiok had gotten a job in a brothel in Wanhua and came back to the village once a month, if then. After a few months she formed one of the semi-permanent liaisons which makes a prostitute's life more bearable and sent for her daughter to live with her. Lau Bit never returned to work in the factory. Not long after, I noticed a gayly dressed young woman, rather heavily rouged, visiting Lau Kim-chiok's mother. My interpreter, amused that I did not recognize her, said that this was Lau Bit. She couldn't have been much over sixteen, but, as with so many young prostitutes, her youth disappeared with her innocence. Just before I left the village, I heard that Lau Bit had had her first abortion.

Relations between Lim Chieng-cua and his wife improved considerably after the crisis of Lau Kim-chiok's return. Although Lim Chieng-cua did not appear any more attentive than usual, I think his wife at last realized that among other things, her husband no longer cared for the responsibilities and expenses of the kind of entertainment he had enjoyed during his affair with Kim-chiok. He had not, in fact, for years, but Chui-ieng's outrage and jealousy prevented her from accepting this. She still complains about money and on occasion refers vaguely to past excesses, but she is more cautious now in her choice of words.